

City of San Jose

Vacant Land Inventory, July 2007

Methodology and Limitations

The Vacant Land Inventory was prepared through interpretation of aerial photographs taken of the City of San Jose in April/May, 2006. Vacant land areas were identified from these photos and entered into a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database. Then, through monitoring of the issuance of building permits, the database was updated to reflect the continued vacant status of these areas as of July 2007.

While the information contained herein is believed accurate, errors may occur due to source limitations (e.g., tree cover and other obstructions) and the GIS data translation process. Where aerial photos indicate the presence of new improvements on vacant lands, these areas are considered developed if building foundations or structures are observed. The inventory does not monitor the redevelopment of lands with prior improvements or measure the intensity of improvements or their occupancy (i.e., vacancy rate of buildings).

The inventory generally includes only those lands identified on the San Jose 2020 General Plan that are within the Urban Service Area (USA) and which are designated for urban development. However, no representation is made or implied as to the suitability or availability of these lands for development. Some vacant lands may have approved development entitlements.

The General Plan is amended as many as four times a year. Therefore, land area may be added or subtracted from identified General Plan land use categories as a result of approval of these amendments.

Some of the vacant lands designated as Public/Quasi-Public on the accompanying Vacant Land Inventory map may not be suitable for urban development or may be intended for permanent open space uses (e.g., buffer lands surrounding the Water Pollution Control Plant in Alviso).

Parcel lines represented on the accompanying map are for illustrative purposes only. Vacant land areas identified commonly extend beyond the boundaries of a parcel or parcels. For tracking purposes, only one Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) is used to identify each vacant land area.

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Summary of Findings

Residential

The supply of vacant residential lands in San Jose was approximately 800 acres as of July 2007. Over three-quarters of these lands were designated for single-family development, the majority of which were located within a half-mile of the eastern and southern extents of the City's Urban Service Area (i.e., in the Berryessa, Alum Rock, Evergreen, Edenvale, and Almaden Planning Areas¹). By contrast, multi-family lands were more centrally located, with over 90% occurring in the Downtown and/or within a one-mile radius of the existing light rail transit system.

Given this limited vacant land supply, the future rate of land absorption will be much slower than in prior decades.² In any case, this does not necessarily translate into a reduced rate of housing production, since projects are now primarily occurring through land redevelopment and project densities are rising.³ In fact, since 2000, single-family detached units have represented only one-quarter of new housing unit yield, as the large majority is provided by higher density apartment, condominium, and townhome developments.

¹Planning Areas are large geographic subareas of San Jose referenced in *General Plan 2020*.

²Land absorption rate, residential, 1980-2005= 325 acres/year (average).

³New residential project density, 2006-2007= 45 dwelling units/acre (average).

Commercial

The supply of vacant commercial lands in San Jose was only about 125 acres as of July 2007. These lands were geographically dispersed and generally small in size.⁴ The only noteworthy concentration of vacant commercial land was a 33-acre property at the northeast corner of Highway 85 and Almaden Expressway (in the Cambrian/Pioneer Planning Area).

This limited vacant land supply represents less than 5% of all commercial lands in the City, such that the future rate of land absorption will be much slower than in prior decades.⁵ The majority of the City's commercial lands were developed prior to 1975, and present day construction activity has been concentrated on previously developed lands. Large-scale, recent examples of commercial redevelopment include new high-rise buildings in Downtown, and renovation/expansion of several regional shopping centers (e.g., Santana Row, Valley Fair, Oakridge, Eastridge).

⁴Commercial lands, vacant area= 1.5 acres (average).

⁵Land absorption rate, commercial, 1980-2005= 35 acres/year (average).

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Industrial

The supply of vacant industrial lands in San Jose was approximately 3,250 acres as of July 2007. Half of these lands were located in the North Coyote Campus Industrial area, with the remainder being concentrated in, and evenly distributed among, the Alviso, North, Edenvale, and Evergreen Planning Areas.

The rate of industrial land absorption has closely mirrored fluctuations in the local high tech economy over the last twenty years, ranging from single-digit acreage lows to highs of 200 acres or more in the early-1980's and late-1990's⁶. This pattern is expected to continue given that absorption has dropped since the "dot com bust" but demand for new space will inevitably return, at which time a sufficient amount of prime vacant industrial land is ready and available for development.

⁶Land absorption rate, industrial, 1980-2005= 150 acres/year (average).

Figure 1: San Jose Planning Areas and Urban Service Area



Table 1
City of San Jose
Vacant Land Supply (in acres)
by Land Use and Planning Area, July 2007

Planning Area	Residential ¹			Non-Residential				Total
	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Subtotal	Commercial	Industrial	Other ²	Subtotal	
Almaden	84	1	85					85
Alum Rock	122	26	148	10	8	19	37	185
Alviso	8		8	15	364	637	1,016	1,024
Berryessa	135	20	155		56	12	68	223
Cambrian/Pioneer	8	17	25	36		1	37	62
Central	20	22	42	14	39	5	58	100
Coyote					1,616		1,616	1,616
Edenvale	42	1	43	11	400	3	414	457
Evergreen	147		147	21	364	17	402	549
North	4	24	28	7	295	25	327	355
South	44	62	106	5	92	16	113	219
West Valley	3	2	5	3			3	8
Willow Glen	9	7	16	3		4	7	23
Total	626	182	808	125	3,234	739	4,098	4,906

¹For the purpose of defining single-family and multi-family residential land use categories, single-family includes General Plan land use designations up to and including Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/A), while multi-family consists of designations with densities above that.

²The "other" land use category is comprised of vacant areas with a Public/Quasi-Public General Plan land use designation.

Figure 1
Vacant Land Supply by Land Use,
July 2007

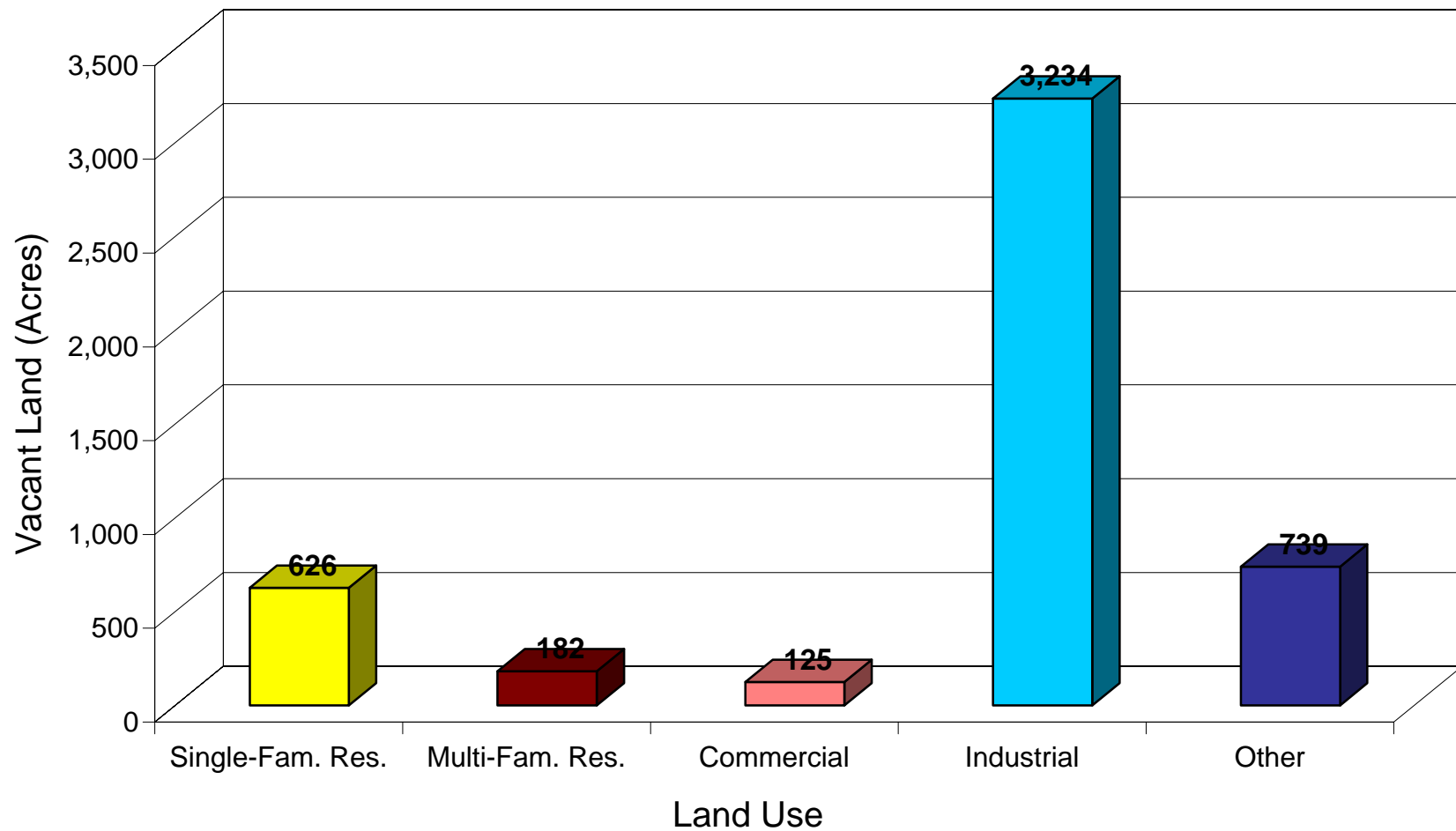


Table 2
City of San Jose
Vacant Residential Land Supply (in acres)
by General Plan Designation and Planning Area, July 2007

Planning Area	Residential General Plan Designation												Total
	UH* (0.2 DU/A)	RR* (0.2 DU/A)	ER* (1.0 DU/A)	VLDR* (2 DU/A)	VLDR* (3 DU/A)	LDR* (5.0 DU/A)	MLDR* (8.0 DU/A)	MDR* (8-16 DU/A)	MHDR* (12-25 DU/A)	HDR* 25-50 DU/A)	TCR* (20-55 DU/A)	RS-C* (25+ DU/A)	
Almaden			3	59		21	1		1				85
Alum Rock	49			23		11	29	10	15	1	10		148
Alviso								8					8
Berryessa	29	8		72		12	12	2	3		17		155
Cambrian/Pioneer							7	1	6	11			25
Central							10	9	9	3	8	3	42
Coyote													
Edenvale				3		14	22	3	1				43
Evergreen		18	22	32	8	20	46	1					147
North							4				24		28
South			25				5	14		62			106
West Valley							2	1	2				5
Willow Glen				1		1	6	1	4	3			16
Total	78	26	50	190	8	79	144	50	41	80	59	3	808

*UH=Urban Hillside, RR= Rural Residential; ER= Estate Residential; VLDR= Very Low Density Residential;
LDR= Low Density Residential; MLDR= Medium Low Density Residential; MDR= Medium Density Residential;
MHDR= Medium High Density Residential; HDR= High Density Residential; TCR= Transit Corridor Residential;
RS-C= Residential Support for the Core Area.

Note: DU/A = dwelling units per acre.

Figure 2
Vacant Residential Land Supply by Planning Area,
July 2007

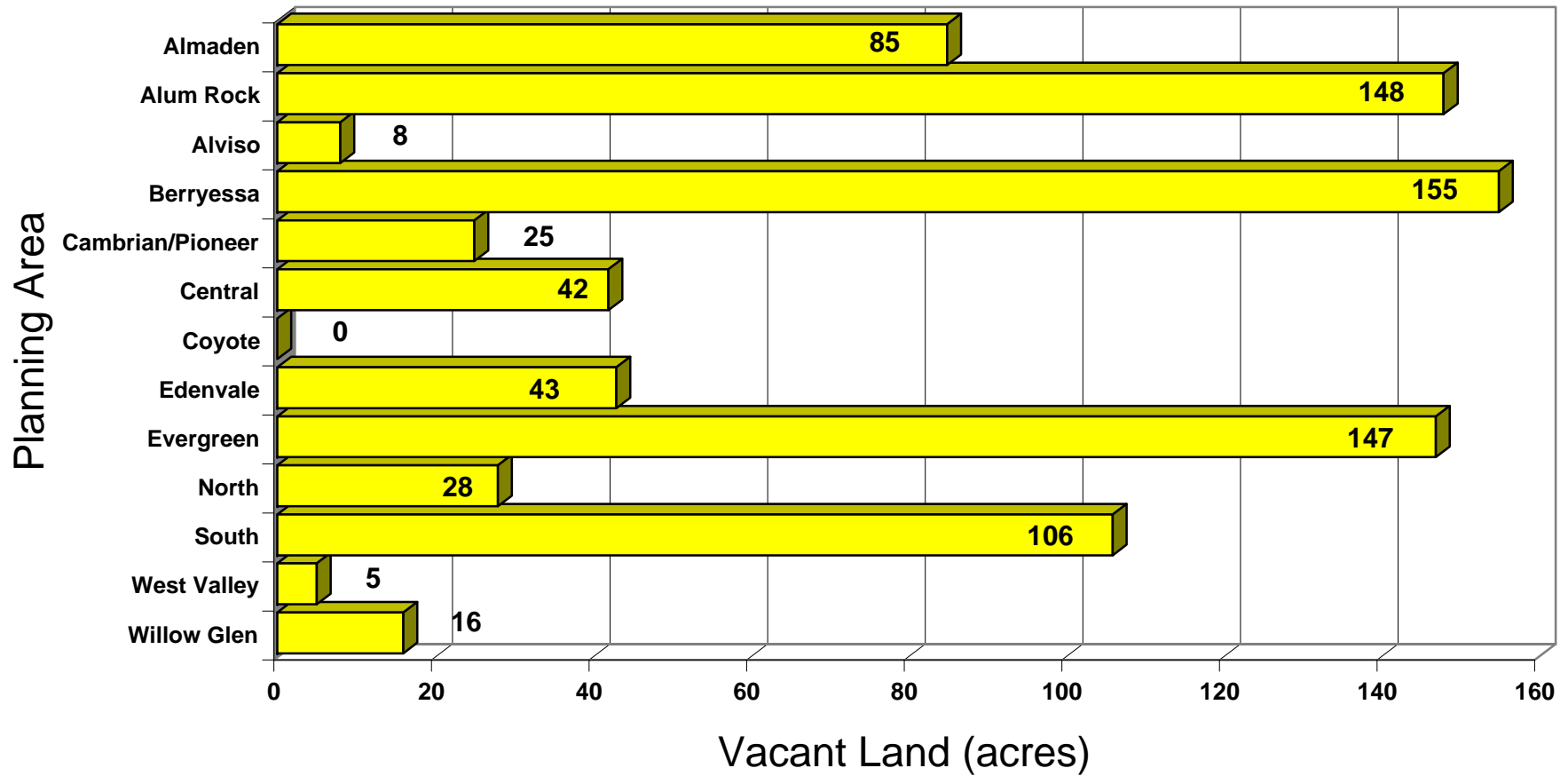


Table 3
City of San Jose
Vacant Commercial Land Supply (in acres)
by General Plan Designation and Planning Area, July 2007

Planning Area	Commercial General Plan Designation							Total
	Office	Neighborhood Community Commercial	General Commercial	Regional Commercial	Core Area	River Commercial	Combined Residential/ Commercial	
Almaden								
Alum Rock		3	7					10
Alviso						6	9	15
Berryessa								
Cambrian/Pioneer	3		33					36
Central	5	2	4		3			14
Coyote								
Edenvale	4		7					11
Evergreen	10	3	5	3				21
North			7					7
South	1		4					5
West Valley			2				1	3
Willow Glen	2		1					3
Total	25	8	70	3	3	6	10	125

Figure 3
Vacant Commercial Land Supply by Planning Area,
July 2007

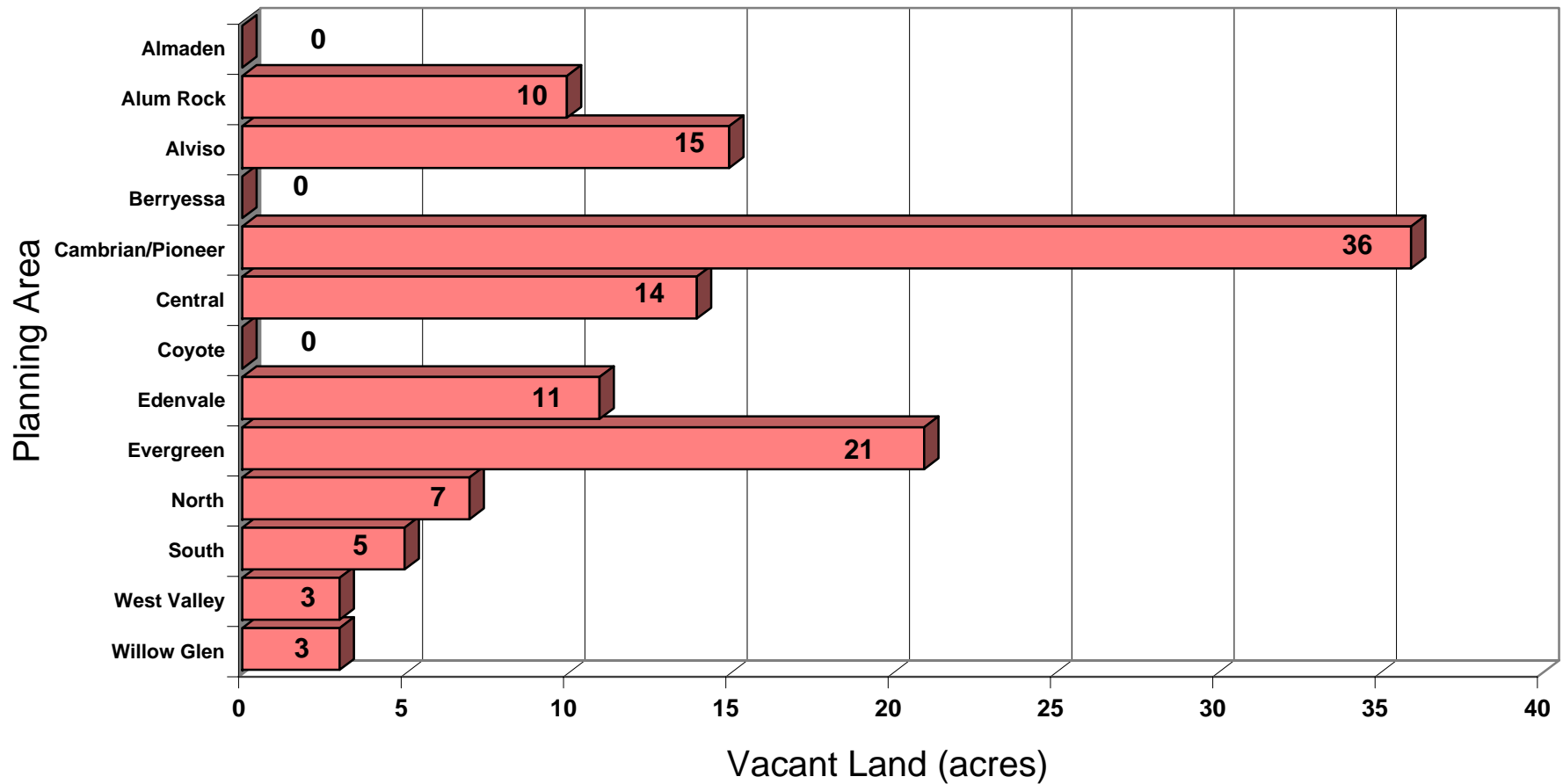


Table 4
City of San Jose
Vacant Industrial Land Supply (in acres)
by General Plan Designation and Planning Area, July 2007

Planning Area	Industrial General Plan Designation						Total
	Industrial/ Commercial	Campus Industrial	Industrial Park	Industrial Core Area	Light Industrial	Heavy Industrial	
Almaden							
Alum Rock					8		8
Alviso	227				137		364
Berryessa	13		25		8	10	56
Cambrian/Pioneer							
Central	13				22	4	39
Coyote		1,616					1,616
Edenvale	88		312				400
Evergreen		322	35		7		364
North	21		201	70		3	295
South	1		61		14	16	92
West Valley							
Willow Glen							
Total	363	1,938	634	70	196	33	3,234

Figure 4
Vacant Industrial Land Supply by Planning Area,
July 2007

